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TAGS: MARR MASS MOPS PREL PGOV TU IZ AF RU
SUBJECT: SCENESETTER FOR THE 23-26 MARCH VISIT OF CHAIRMAN
OF THE JOINT CHIEFS GENERAL PACE

Classified By: AMBASSADOR ROSS WILSON, REASONS 1.4 (b) AND (d)

11. (C) SUMMARY: Your March 23-26 visit comes at a time when progress has been made in improving the character of US-Turkish relations that frayed badly in 2003-2005. Senior level dialogue, including on the military-to-military side, has resumed; Turkey has downplayed its whining about the PDD and Kirkuk in favor of concerted action to support Iraq and the success of Coalition efforts there; and Ankara hugely appreciated the US role in securing EU agreement to open accession negotiations last October. Despite this progress and an active role in the Global War on Terror) reflected in the terrorism conference you will be attending, restoring mutual trust and a real sense of collaboration is at best a work in progress. Meetings here with leaders of HAMAS brought strong private protests from us and enraged both Israel and long-time supporters of Turkey in Congress and elsewhere. Despite good Turkish messages on Iran and Syria, leading officials have made clear they don't want sanctions, oppose any military option on Iran and won't isolate Syria. In the Black Sea, Turkey comes across more concerned about its relations with Russia than working with its NATO allies. Formerly strong defense industry relationships are on the ropes. Domestically, Turkey is entering a period of political turmoil in the run-up to CHOD Ozkok,s replacement in August, selection of a new president in next May, and parliamentary elections that must occur no later than November 2007. The struggle for power has many aspects, but is widely seen here as a contest between Kemalist secularists and a more Islamist orientation championed by the government of PM Erdogan. Your visit, simultaneous travel here by CODEL Warner, and FM Gul,s March 27-29 talks in Washington provide important opportunities to review key foreign policy issues, discuss how we can best work together in coming years, and further rebuild frayed personal relationships, especially with Turkey,s military. END SUMMARY.

WALKING A MIDDLE EAST TIGHT ROPE

¶2. (C) Syria and Iran. The GOT insists that it can deliver tough messages on behalf of the international community. FM Gul reportedly pressed Bashar Assad during his Nov. 2005 visit to Syria to cooperate with UNIIC, prevent foreign fighters from entering Iraq, and cease support to Palestinian rejectionists. Turkish officials have told us they share our belief that Iranian development of nuclear weapons presents a global danger, and their public and private messages emphasize the need for Iran to cooperate with the IAEA and to restore international trust. Turkey supports diplomacy for dealing with Iran, is deeply suspicious of sanctions, and very much wants to avoid a confrontation. You should emphasize the importance of strong public statements, international consensus, and the need for our militaries to begin quiet consultations on dealing with an increased Iranian threat to NATO.

¶3. (C) Hamas. The GOT's reception of a Hamas delegation on February 16 was awkward and amateurish. Turkish officials assured us they impressed on Hamas the need to fulfill Quartet conditions, but their public statements have been weak. MFA U/S Tuygan visited Israel March 6-8 to soothe Israeli concerns over the Hamas visit, and FM Livni has reportedly accepted an invitation to visit Turkey later this spring. FM Gul will travel to Washington later this month for the ATC conference and will meet with Secretary Rice and NSA Steve Hadley. We have encouraged Gul to mend Turkey's fences with Congress and the American Jewish community.

INCREASING COOPERATION WITH IRAQ

¶4. (SBU) Turkey is well-engaged in promoting inclusive Iraqi politics. Its ambassador in Baghdad works closely with Ambassador Khalizad and is pressing for a national unity government. Their special Envoy for Iraq visited Baghdad Feb. 23-25 and met with a wide array of Iraqi political figures, including Kurdish leaders with whom Turkey has had tense relations. Acting PM Jafari visited Ankara several days later and had useful discussions on economic cooperation. Turkey remains concerned about the PKK and Kirkuk, but now realizes that a successful Iraq is key to addressing these matters. In this context, the possibility of civil war in Iraq has both the GOT and the TGS very concerned. Expect to be asked for your candid opinion on the situation as well as the coalition plan and US expectations of Turkey in the months ahead.

¶5. (SBU) Turkey provides significant logistical support for the coalition effort in Iraq. The Incirlik cargo hub has facilitated the movement of over 129 million pounds of equipment for coalition troops since its initiation in May 2005. The Incirlik air refueling hub has conducted 2800 sorties delivering 192 million pounds of fuel in support of OIF and OEF since 2003. Twenty-five percent of sustainment fuel for the coalition crosses through the Habur Gate connecting Turkey and Iraq as does two-thirds of humanitarian fuel for the Iraqi people. Habur is a bottleneck that is being upgraded; talks on opening additional border crossings have gone nowhere. You may want to emphasize the economic benefits of opening additional border gate(s), emphasizing that increased trade will benefit both Iraq and Turkey.

BUT THE PKK PRESENCE IN IRAQ RANKLES

¶6. (S) Attacks attributed to the PKK Kurdistan Workers, Party continue against Turkish soldiers and Jandarma in Turkey's southeast, in what the GOT presumes are cross-border operations emanating from Iraq. The media and sensitive intelligence reporting are predicting a spring escalation of PKK attacks in Turkish cities coinciding with the March 21st annual celebration of Nevruz (Kurdish New Year). Terrorist incidents in Istanbul, Van and elsewhere in February and March may have been the start of this. TLFC Commander GEN Buyukanit backpedaled away from his talk in Washington in

December about a Turkish military & spring cleaning⁸ operation against the PKK in northern Iraq, and all judge such action unlikely absent large-scale PKK action in Turkey's cities.

¶7. (S) During the September visit of Generals Jones and Smith, TGS rejected EUCOM's offer of aerial surveillance inside Turkey, but welcomed CENTCOM's offer to continue aerial overflights of PKK camps on the Iraqi side of border; CF now carry out flights every two weeks. Turkey accepted EUCOM's offer of Information Operations (IO) support, and interagency discussions have taken place on this. TGS also welcomed an enhanced intelligence-sharing program on an intermittent basis tied to specific Turkish operations. Indications are the intelligence provided has been beneficial to GOT. CENTCOM offered to expand the list of PKK HVI on the CENTRIX system and to facilitate TU/IZ mil-mil contacts, which may include joint border patrols. Discussions on these offers continue, but will likely not bear fruit in the short term. The interagency initiative to partner with Turkey and the Europeans to pursue law enforcement cases against the PKK presses on. In December, a CIA/DIA/FBI/DOJ/Treasury team visited Ankara; they and the Turks identified two PKK operatives in Europe to pursue together. Your interlocutors may complain about the absence of kinetic action against the PKK, but we have a good story to tell and we should tell it.

PARTNER IN GWOT

¶8. (S/NF) Turkey, France and Italy have agreed on an eight month rotating command of the ISAF Kabul Regional Command starting in the second half of 2006. Turkey will simultaneously open a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in neighboring Wardak Province. Turkey is involved in the reconstruction of schools and is exploring counter-narcotics training programs for Afghan police and alternative livelihood options for poppy farmers. Following PM Erdogan's May 2005 visit to Afghanistan, the GOT boosted its aid to Afghanistan to \$100 million. Turkey continues to provide significant personnel and assets for Operation Active Endeavor, KFOR, and Operation Althea. It will host a Proliferation Security Initiative combined air, land and sea exercise (ANATOLIAN SUN) in May 2006, with US participation. You should recognize Turkey's support in the Global War on Terrorism.

¶9. (C) Turkey limits cooperation on Black Sea maritime security outside the context of the BLACKSEAFOR and Operation BLACK SEA HARMONY (OBSH) initiatives they originated. The Turks argue that an active U.S./NATO role would alienate Russia in an area where its cooperation is needed. However, last week they agreed to a bilateral Black Sea engagement opportunity planned for next month with USS PORTER.

MIL TO MIL RELATIONS

¶10. (C) At the senior officer level, a steady stream of visitors (Jones, Wald, Hagee, Hobbins, Buyukanit, Smith) has started to rebuild mil-mil relations, but real teamwork remains a goal not a reality. Improvements at the top have not penetrated the more deep seated resentment held by the junior and mid-level officers (reflected in the Turkish Society more broadly) who will become tomorrow's leaders. Your speech at the War Academy will help to reach out to these future leaders.

SPECIAL FORCES RE-ENGAGEMENT

¶11. (S) A casualty of the Iraq war was the relationship between our Special Forces (SF). The July 4, 2003 Suleymaniyah incident, in which US forces hooded and handcuffed Turkish SF personnel, remains a sore that may take

a generation to heal. A Turkish Special Forces 19-27 Sep 05 visit to Washington at the Joint Staff,s invitation was helpful. A Small Unit Exchange visit this month and a SOCEUR-initiated SF JCET now scheduled for fourth quarter 2006 will be good next steps.

DISAPPOINTMENT DOGS DEFENSE INDUSTRY COOPERATION

¶12. (SBU) Bilateral defense industry cooperation is at its nadir. Boeing was the last firm to win a direct sale when Turkey awarded it a contract for an Airborne Early Warning and Control (AEW&C) system in 2002. Boeing and Bell Textron decided not to participate in an attack helicopter tender due to onerous terms and conditions imposed on bidders. Sikorsky -- which had considered establishing its International Blackhawk production facility in Turkey if it won a tender for 52 utility helicopters for the Turkish Armed Forces and Forestry Service -- may choose not to bid on that tender. Raytheon may also opt out of a tender for a propeller airplane trainer project. General Electric is being squeezed regarding the Turkish Air Force,s acquisition of parts and engines, the result of which will cripple the AF,s abilities. Three US firms -- General Dynamics, Bell Textron and General Atomics Aviation - have closed their offices in

Turkey. We have raised our concerns about the negative impact of terms and conditions that are driving our companies away. You should express disappointment that US military suppliers are unable to compete in the Turkish market, emphasize the importance of interoperability, and urge action to create a more welcoming climate for our firms.

¶13. (SBU) Turkey is a Level III partner in the Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) program, with a pledged investment of \$175M and a purchase of 100 planes. However, in return for its participation in JSF, Turkey is asking for \$5-6B in workshare, including production of a major component. Lockheed Martin and its partners are working hard to identify appropriate opportunities for Turkey that will achieve the government's objective. However, we have underscored to the Undersecretary of Defense Industries that to achieve this Turkey will need to invest in new technology and demonstrate competitive product quality and pricing.

Visit Ankara's Classified Web Site at
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/ankara/>

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